



Chapter Two

The Planning Process

Public Participation Process
Surveys and Feedbacks
Vision, Goals, and Objectives

DRAFT

1. Public Participation Process

The Bureau of Planning and its consultant team have been working with community organizations, residents, property owners, business, and other stakeholders through an extensive public participation process to gather input, generate ideas, and review draft proposals. The process consists of 6 public meetings, a project website, advisory committee meetings, and individual stakeholder interviews from January to June 2006.

Public Meetings

The development of the Simpson Road Corridor Redevelopment Plan Update revolved around six (6) public meetings that involved XXX participants. These meetings were announced through the project website, NPU meetings and agendas, and post mailed to property owners.

Kick-off Meeting (Thursday, January 26, 2006):

This first meeting introduced the planning process, reviewed the initial assessment developed by the consultant team, and conducted a series of surveys to gather input from the participants about the issues and opportunities in the study area.

Community Workshop (Saturday, March 4, 2006):

The workshop created a forum for various stakeholders to take a 'hands-on' role in developing an overall vision and character for the study area. It included a review of the survey results from the Kickoff meeting and a working session to identify the area's future improvement potential in the following aspects:

- Transportation
- Parks and Open Space
- Streetscape
- Commercial/Services Development
- Mixed-use Development

- Single-family, Townhomes and Multifamily Residential Development

Preliminary Recommendation Meeting (Wednesday, March 22, 2006):

This meeting included a review of the goals and objectives, and preliminary concepts and recommendations developed by the consultants.

Land Use, Zoning and Action Recommendation Meeting (Wednesday, April 12, 2006):

The planning team presented the market analysis results; urban design concepts for activity nodes; land use, zoning, transportation recommendations; and preliminary implementation plan.

Draft Plan Review Meeting (Tuesday, May 30, 2006):

The meeting reviewed the refined goals and objectives, draft recommendations for all plan elements and a detailed implementation plan.

Final Plan Review Meeting (TBD):

After the public review of the Draft plan for 2 weeks, this meeting reviewed the revised Draft Plan based on received comments and ...



Advisory Committee Meetings

An advisory committee was established at the early stage of the public participation process to help the planning team develop and review recommendations, and serve as liaisons to the larger community in the entire planning process. The committee consisted of representatives from NPU's, neighborhood organizations, businesses, major property owners, and residents in the study area. The advisory committee met prior to each public meeting to go over issues, recommendations, and provide inputs.

Stakeholder Interviews

The planning team conducted individual interviews with ten different stakeholders in the study area, who represent different interests groups including residents, churches, businesses, and neighborhoods. A summary of the results is presented in the Appendix C.

Project Website

The bureau of Planning has hosted a website as a tool for public involvement. The website was used to post meeting notifications, distribute meeting materials, plan maps and documents. It is accessible at: <http://www.atlantaga.gov/simpson.aspx>

2. Surveys and Feedbacks

Two surveys were conducted at the kick-off meeting to help gather information and provide direction for the plan development.

Opinion Survey

The opinion survey consisted of 13 questions to measure the respondents' perceptions of the corridor study area in the following aspects:

- Perception of the corridor's physical place and condition
- General retail and business assessment
- General traffic and pedestrian safety assessment

The results of the survey provided a base to develop the vision, goals, and objectives for the Simpson Road Corridor Redevelopment Plan Update. The detailed results can be seen in the Appendix C.

Visual preference Survey

A visual preference survey was conducted among the kick-off meeting participants to help visualize what might be the desired character of the corridor when it is to be improved. A multi-page booklet with images representing single-family housing, multi-family housing, mixed-use, commercial, streetscape, and gateways was distributed. Participants were asked to rank the images from 1, meaning unacceptable to 7, meaning very acceptable.

The following images (Figure 2.1) are chosen by the participants as the most desirable ones that apply to the study area. Based on but not limited to the images selected, the planning team got the direction on how the residents and stakeholders would like to see the corridor improved in the future. The basic characters indicated from the resulted include:

- Single-family residential that are consistent with the existing corridor neighborhood character in terms of scale and architectural design.

- Multi-family residential with a higher density buffered from the single-family residential neighborhood at appropriate location.
- Neighborhood serving commercial and mixed-use development that respect the scale and density of surrounding neighborhood, and incorporate the historic character in the architectural design.
- Pedestrian friendly streetscape with street-level activities, shaded trees, furniture, and possible on-street parking.
- Gateway features that identify the neighborhoods and corridor appropriately.

Figure 2. 1 Visual Preference Survey Results



Single-Family



Single-Family



Multi-Family



Mixed Use



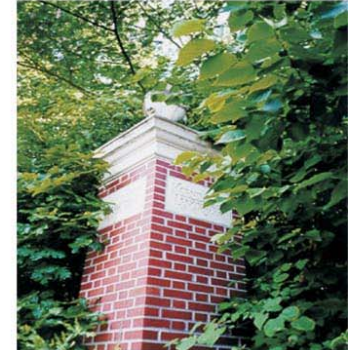
Streetscape



Streetscape



Commercial



Gateway

3. Vision, Goals, and Objectives

Vision

The vision statement developed through the first phase of the planning process is:

“The Simpson Street/Road will evolve into a vibrant urban corridor that the community and residents will cherish and enjoy. It will serve three major roles: a community builder, a people-friendly public space, and a route for diverse modes of travel.”

Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives for each element of the Simpson Corridor plan has been developed based upon public input gathered through the public participation process, especially the kick-off meeting and the charrette held at the early stage of the study, together with staff and consultant input. These goals and objectives reflect closely the desire of the community.

Land Use and Zoning

Goal: The development and protection of land use pattern that will allow for the rational and efficient use of properties along the corridor.

Objectives:

- Protect stable single-family neighborhoods and cluster intensive uses at activity nodes
- Encourage mix use and higher density development around key intersections
- Encourage transit oriented development at Beltline activity node
- Provide appropriate buffers between more intensive uses and less intensive uses

- Develop zoning recommendations that reflect the desired scale, character and compatibility with existing Simpson corridor neighborhoods.
- Focus development and redevelopment toward substandard, deteriorated and dilapidated parcels.

Urban Design

Goal: protect and improve the desirable image and character of the corridor and activity centers

Objectives:

- Promote building forms that encourage pedestrian usage and increase pedestrian comfort
- Encourage the use of landscaping as a means of enhancing the physical and environmental image
- Use urban design guidelines to guide the scale and character of development, and to maintain historic and cultural resources in the corridor area.
- Create gateways at appropriate locations of the corridor

Transportation

Goal: Enhance the pedestrian environment by making walking safe and convenient

Objectives:

- Create and maintain a system of safe sidewalks and pedestrian crossings to improve pedestrian circulation and reduce vehicle/pedestrian conflicts.
- Ensure that all pedestrian facilities area accessible and accommodating to persons with disabilities.
- Utilize building and site planning designs that reduce the walking distances

Goal: Improve vehicular safety along Simpson corridor, while respecting its urban context and impact on other modes of travel

Objectives:

- Reduce traffic disruptions associated with a high number of turning movements and curb cuts
- Target problematic traffic points and intersections through improvement programs
- Provide adequate parking in commercial and mixed-use nodes
- Connect new developments with existing street pattern
- Utilize access management solutions, such as consolidated curb cuts, cross-access easements, and alleys, to reduce the number of curb cuts
- Utilize roadway design and signalization programs that favor drivers who drive responsibly
- Eliminate drainage problems

Goal: Make bicycling pleasant and safe

Objectives:

- Connect Beltline activity node to Downtown with bicycle facilities
- Increase on-street bicycle lane options, signage and awareness
- Increase connections to existing and planned off-street bicycle paths
- Provide bicycle parking facilities at activity nodes

Goal: Promote a variety of transit choices

- Enhance and improve transit facilities with integration of the Belt Line
- Encourage enhancement of existing MARTA service
- Provide improved bus facilities, such as posted schedules, shelters, and improved reliability
- Provide land use patterns that support transit

Economic Development

Goal: Promote economic development in the Simpson corridor area

Objectives:

- Retain and expand existing commercial and retail establishments
- Expand the local market by adding non-competitive anchor type of business
- Utilize available economic development tools and programs to help economic development along the corridor
- Encourage private development and redevelopment activities which will provide employment opportunities at all income levels.
- Remove barriers identified and associated with business retention and expansion

Housing

Goal: Improve housing quality and options

Objectives:

- Encourage a balanced development of market rate and workforce housing along the Simpson corridor
- Encourage the development of new housing that is sensitive and compatible to existing neighborhood character.
- Encourage the rehabilitation of sub-standard housing through both conventional and public financing
- Identify senior housing opportunities where seniors can walk to parks, retail services, churches, and other daily needs

Environmental

Goal: Create a safe environment for residents and visitors.

Objectives:

- Support effective policing in residential areas.
- Encourage urban design principles that promote safety.

Goal: Ensure adequate infrastructure to support future development.

Objectives:

- Maintain and rehabilitate utilities and infrastructure.
- Find alternatives to aboveground utilities, where possible.
- Incorporate natural resource protection and open space provision into new infrastructure and improvement projects, such as participation in the Atlanta Greenway Acquisition Project.

Goals: Provide a range of parks and open space.

Objectives:

- Utilize parks and recreation areas, including the BeltLine, to connect residential areas and commercial/mixed-use areas.
- Encourage parks, greenways, multiuse trails and recreation facilities that meet the needs of different age groups.
- Increase the number of public spaces.
- Integrate natural resource features into recreation amenities.